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Voice Training for School Children

BY

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PREFACE

The need of a short, concise and practical manual treating especially of the training of the child voice has been forcibly impressed upon me by my experience in directing the supervision of music in the schools of New York City—a vast field for observation.

In our schools (and the same is true elsewhere) are found a large number of conscientious teachers who are striving to do the right things in music. These teachers feel the limitations caused by their own lack of professional training and by the fact that the supervising teachers can give but a few minutes to them in their occasional visits.

Voice quality, however, is insisted upon as a first requisite, and, as conditions exist, the class teacher must conduct the daily practice. In the absence of the special teacher, whose visits are of necessity much less frequent than we could wish, the class teacher feels the need of counsel and of directions to which

she might refer, if set down in black and white.

It is the purpose of this little book to supply the needful directions for the teacher's study and guidance in straightforward and untechnical language.

In the arrangement of the text the more important propositions and directions are printed in bold-faced type, so that they may be found without hunting through a considerable amount of reading matter.

The excellent work that I have seen in very numerous instances proves that the class teacher, with the help and supervision of a competent special teacher, can obtain most satisfactory results in the care and training of children's voices. This is not surprising when we consider the education they have had in methods of teaching and of school management, which make a splendid foundation for any line of instruction.

It must be remembered that "eternal vigilance" is the price of good tone production. This vigilance must never be relaxed, as children will lapse into bad vocal habits immediately if the teacher is at all careless.

Those who expect the best results, therefore, will listen diligently to the tone production, and correct at once the least indulgence in bad voice quality.

It is my hope that the instructions in the following pages will prove helpful to teachers in their work of training children to sing with sweet, pure and lovely tone.

FRANK R. RIX.

New York, 1910.

VOICE TRAINING FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN

Stripped of the customary verbiage by which writers successfully conceal the potent facts, the subject of the care and cultivation of children's voices lies within the capacity and understanding of the class teacher. Introductory words.

Doubtless some will have greater success than others, but by carefully practicing the methods embodied in the following pages any teacher with average gifts may obtain satisfactory results.

In this brochure the writer intends to avoid theorizing about the mechanism and physiology of voice production, breathing, registers, overtones, etc., however important these may be and useful to the private instructor. Author's purpose.

His endeavor is, first, to point out the common faults, and second, to give positive and yet simple directions for cultivating the voice in the classrooms of the public schools.

He will also endeavor to show the teacher how to recognize both good and bad quality of voice, thus giving confidence in practice.

In short, it is his purpose to show what to do and how to do it.

He hopes in this way to divest the subject of the mystery that usually surrounds it, and to give the teacher confidence in one part of music teaching which is ordinarily attempted with timidity, and which, at best, is usually accompanied with results that are incomplete, and far short of what is easily possible.

Rightly used, the child voice is the most beautiful of musical instruments, and has an infinite capacity as the medium of self-expression.

Powers of the child.

Musically, the powers of the child are limited only by the ability of the teacher to suggest, to direct, and to inspire.

Self-consciousness.

Nature has so fashioned us that we can adequately express our feelings and desires without artificial rules. To reduce this expression to the tyranny of precepts founded on analysis of the processes employed makes us immediately self-conscious, rigid, and incapable of doing with ease and freedom what we wish to do and what we are capable of doing.

Positive teaching.

Children, especially, should be taught to do things without discussion as to the reason or

method underlying the doing, since they have the faith to accept our teaching.

Class teachers also should deal with the doing of right things **by giving positive directions**, and by employing the unconscious processes of nature, which, however complex they really are, in effect are simple and direct.

Complex acts may be voluntarily performed simply by recalling the sensation, and by willing to do them, such as yawning and coughing.

So, by utilizing natural processes which accompany certain feelings and desires we may, without self-consciousness, bring about correct breathing in singing and right placement of the voice. (See 51.)

METHODS

1. The voice is the most important instrument of self-expression. **Early training.**

In early training it must be used carefully, singing softly. More power will come gradually and with practice. When the voice has been "placed" we should try, with care, to secure more power, but not at the expense of pure quality. **Children should always sing easily.**

As the child's nature is simple, direct, natural, our teaching must be the same. We

should, in voice culture especially, avoid artificiality.

How to teach.

The child should be taught what to do, and his self-consciousness should not be excited by much explanation of processes.

Relaxation needed for good tone.

2. In singing, facial expression should be pleasant. Stiff, uncomfortable attitudes should be avoided. **Good singing demands proper relaxation, especially of the throat and lower jaw. Any rigidity is hurtful.** This may be observed in the class by bodies stiffly held, by chins thrust forward, by frowning, and by the prominence of neck muscles or of veins. The teacher must observe the peculiarities of each pupil, and individuals making these mistakes should be looked after.

There is too much near-sighted teaching. Instructors should look to individual pupils to discover and rectify their mistakes.

Class tone.

3. **The combined tone of all the voices should so blend that individual peculiarities do not stand out.** In ordinary conditions the tone is compounded of good and bad, but **poor class tone is the result of individually bad voices. The teacher should locate the latter, and seat such pupils near to the front,** so that they may be easily cautioned and controlled. If class work does not cure them they should have individual training, apart from the class.

The ideal to which some teachers still cling, that boys' singing should be hearty and vigorous, is at times hard to overcome, because, **for a while, the effort to produce good tone seems to result in a loss of freedom and spontaneity.** The latter condition, however, will not persist if right methods are faithfully continued, and before long there will be greater freedom and spontaneity than before. **Wrong ideals.**

4. **The thick, hard, forced, noisy chest tone of boys and girls** does not blend well in harmony, and possesses no merit save that which accompanies mere force. It is wholly incapable of expressing fine thoughts and emotions, and is responsible for numerous faults. **Chest tone inexpressive.**

Among these are lack of concentration and interest, singing out of tune, poor interpretation, limited range of voice, and small repertoire. It is fatiguing, and eventually ruins the voice. **Faults.**

5. **Good tone is never hard, forced or pushed. Instead, it should be mellow, lightly poised, and sustained with the feeling of drinking in** the breath, breathing in, or drawing the tone into the mouth. This is the result of economy in giving out the breath, which produces the sensation of holding the breath back. **Characteristics of good tone.**

High tones should have the sensation of being drawn or pulled up toward the top of the head; medium tones toward the hard palate; and low tones

(accompanied by a yawning feeling) **toward the back of the mouth or pharynx.**

Position of chest.

6. **The chest, in singing, should be held easily in the elevated position it assumes when a moderate breath has filled the lungs.**

Quality and quantity.

7. Quality and, with practice, quantity of tone is thus produced, and the voice is refined, beautiful, easily controlled and expressive. It is pure and resonant, and blends well in harmony. Being produced without strain, no injury is done to the delicate muscles, and the vocal organs are thus preserved and strengthened for lifelong usefulness.

Those who use the voice in this manner sing in tune.

Ear-training.

8. Children should be able to hear their own voices, and, by training the ear, which is the judge of correctness, learn to criticize and control their own voice production.

Class teacher.

9. **That which concerns the class teacher is how to get good tone, how to know it, and how to keep it.**

Two ways of using voice.

10. **In general, there are two kinds of children's voices,** or, rather, ways of using them. First, the coarse, loud, forced, shouty, "hearty," untrained sort—"the chest voice," which is of rather low pitch, and which grows more and more strained as the pitch goes higher; second, the trained voice, which utilizes the

quality of the "head voice" and blends it with the medium and lower range.

The latter process eliminates the "breaks" between "registers" which are so apparent when the voice is pushed from below upward. **Breaks.**

11. **In very young children,** as in the kindergarten and the first elementary grade, the voice quality is often characterized by a metallic resonance something like that heard in the crying voice of infants. The use of this, a limited chest range, has resulted in the common mistake of composers in setting music for children in keys much too low for good singing. **Quality of very young voices.**

This bleating quality should not be allowed. **Such children should sing softly, with careful enunciation, within the compass of the staff.**

12. The larynx of the young child is a tender instrument, and is not adapted to violent vocal effort. For this reason, too, the younger children should sing softly. **Child's larynx.**

As he grows older the child's laryngeal cartilages and muscles grow firmer and stronger, and the voice gains correspondingly in power. Thus the voices of boys at 11 to 14 years of age, or just previous to the change of voice, are at their best in power and resonance.

REGISTERS

Registers. 13. The so-called registers of the voice must receive our attention.

By a register is meant a series of tones of similar quality produced by the same vibrating mechanism within certain limits.

Names of Registers. 14. It is conceded that **there are three distinct registers in the voice: the low register** (the chest or thick), **the medium** (or thin), **and the small** (or higher). Other names are also used to designate them.

The three divisions are enough for practical purposes in the training of the child voice.

Head voice. 15. **The term "head voice" seems to include in practice both the small and the medium** (or thin) **register.**

Head voice, or "placed voice," is the beautiful quality heard in the trained choirs of English cathedrals, in the parish churches of England and America, and in our public schools where the directions of the musical authorities are carefully followed. It should be found in every school, without exception.

Breaks. 16. **In the untrained voice, "breaks" occur between the registers. Breaks are the points beyond which it is difficult to produce tones in the same manner, and where a new adjustment or mechanism comes into play.**

There is a great difference in quality between the upper and lower register, and, in order that the voice may be well trained, **the singer must be able to cover, or equalize the transition from one register to the other.** This process should be recognized by the teacher in order to work intelligently and to use understandingly the simple means required to mold and blend the voice into a homogeneous series of tones. (See Ex. 41, 42, § 139 to 142.)

Forcing.

17. The use of a register above its natural limit is possible only by forcing and by muscular strain that is most fatiguing and dangerous.

Such forcing will ruin the voice eventually, producing congestion and thickening of the vocal bands.

Results.

In the schools examples of this are often found in the thick, hoarse voices of newsboys and of the neglected children of the tenements, whose shouting in the street is fatal to good voice quality.

Pupils should not be told about the registers. It is sufficient for the teacher to know about them.

Two registers to be considered.

18. In the voice of the school child, **practically only the head** (or thin) **register and the chest** (or thick) **register need be considered at length.**

The **chest voice is formed** by the full vibration of the thick portions of the vocal bands; **the**

thin, or head register, by the vibration of the thin edges of the vocal bands without forcing.

The head register is safe, and the tones are pure, sweet and musical. The chest voice is harsh and unmusical, loud, and inexpressive of beauty.

TO DISTINGUISH REGISTERS

How to know chest and head.

19. If children begin to sing up the scale from e, first line, in a loud voice, they will use the chest register. If they continue upward in this manner the sounds grow louder, and are evidently forced. At about $\bar{c}$ or $\bar{d}$ it is difficult or impossible for them to continue in the same manner, and the voices either cease altogether or else another quality of tone immediately results which is small and sweet, or fluty.

This, which is not an experiment, but an every-day occurrence in too many schools, does not need repeating. **It demonstrates the chest voice** with its hard forced character. **Its upper limit is the "break," and the new quality above the break is the head voice.**

20. If pupils are required to sing the upper tones softly, even below the point at which the chest voice ceased, the quality will be the same as that which is necessary for singing

above the break, namely, that of the head voice.

Now let the children sing softly the scale ascending from e, first line, and they will probably be able to continue, without break or strain, to the upper tone. **This is head voice, if no change in quality is heard in the high tones.**

21. If further demonstration is needed the children may sing the descending scale from ē loudly. It will probably happen that the head voice will be used for the first three or four sounds, but that **sol, fa, mi, re, do** will burst out in the hard, unsympathetic quality so characteristic of the chest voice.

Children's songs.

22. **There has been a great misconception of the child-voice by singers and composers,** as well as teachers, since children, if left to themselves, will sing in the same voice with which they shout in their play. Composers of children's songs, by writing in a contralto range, have added another difficulty to be overcome when we endeavor to teach children to sing properly.

It is necessary, therefore, in such cases, for the teacher to pitch the songs in higher keys, so that they may be sung in head voice. This may be done regardless of the original, by choosing a key that brings the upper and lower tones within the limits of the staff.

23. The reason why more children's voices

are not ruined is that the larynx is elastic, and recovers from a strain that in adults would be impossible.

Movable break.

24. This elasticity of the larynx accounts for the so-called **"movable break."** Younger children can carry the chest tone as high as e, fourth space, the upper limit varying with the amount of forcing; but as they grow older the hardening of the cartilages makes it impossible to sing in the chest voice to such a high pitch. Hence the unwillingness of older boys, who use the thick tones, to sing "high." **This change of the upper limit of the chest voice is the "movable break."**

Natural break.

25. **The natural break** between the unforced chest and the medium register is located at about f, first space, and this should not be exceeded.

Effect of loud singing.

26. **Loud singing in the middle and lower voice should not be permitted,** as it is invariably produced in the chest voice, and will rapidly curtail the upper range, making it possible for such children to sing only on the alto part. These children will be likely to have coarse, hard or breathy tones, and eventually they will be unable to sing softly, since the tone can be produced only by forcing the breath through the congested vocal bands.

When children come into the schools with voices put into this condition by the influences

of their environment, good results in voice training must wait upon a recovery from the chronic laryngitis which is generally present.

27. The chest tones of children are not to be compared with those of some women. The latter are often beautiful, moving, and full of a sympathetic quality that is soul-stirring. The chest tones of children, on the other hand, are wholly devoid of emotional significance.

SOFT SINGING

28. The direction to "sing softly" needs explanation. **How softly should children sing?** Softly and loudly are only relative terms, and may be interpreted differently. **How softly.**

The soft singing demanded is not necessarily that which at times musical interpretation requires, but **is that which is needed to prevent the voice from being forced into the chest tone.**

29. It is obvious, therefore, that **the softness required is that which is needed to produce the head voice,** and as long as the head voice is maintained the singing may be of any degree of power that is consistent therewith.

30. It should be said of habitual **very soft** singing that, while in itself it is sweet and pretty, it is inexpressive of variety in emotional effects, and does not necessarily cultivate the head voice.

When real training should begin.

It may be remarked also that it is useless to "train" children's voices before the larynx has attained a certain degree of firmness. Teachers, therefore, in the kindergarten classes, and in the two first years of the elementary schools, should endeavor to lead the children to sing in proper range, rather softly, and without forcing, but not so softly as to destroy spontaneity of interpretation.

Teacher should decide.

31. Children should not be allowed to determine for themselves the degree of power which they should use. If left without direction they invariably sing too loudly. The teacher should always direct them, and should regulate the strength of tone by positive instructions.

If the children are told to sing "more sweetly," the teacher should direct them how to do so, and if softer singing is needed they should be shown by illustration how soft it should be.

Individuals.

32. If some children's tones are thick, or nasal, or too piercing, they should be cautioned to modify them by directions that will enable them individually to overcome the fault.

Positive teaching.

33. Directions that do not tell how to do the right thing are quite useless. The teacher, for instance, must not say merely that the singing is "too loud," or that words are blurred. She must show just how loudly or softly to sing, and, in enunciation especially, should give careful patterns for imitation.

Negative criticism is worse than useless. Positive directions and patterns should be given that lead to correct doing. In this way good results will be reached and bad habits prevented, with corresponding gain both in time and effort.

34. **When children enter the first grade** the singing should be quite soft, and the harsh voices of individuals should be corrected. **First year.**

As the class gains in expression and in command of voice the singing may be less piano, **but must always be sweet and pleasant.**

35. **It is quite possible to "hush" the voices too much, and thus deaden the singing below the point of interest. This must be as carefully guarded against as loud singing.** The problem is to keep the voices sweet and lovely while preserving interest and spontaneity. This may be accomplished by attention to the **individual pupils,** whose faults **should be corrected** by special directions **rather than by repressing the majority** who are doing well. **"Hushing."**

36. **In the first grade** the singing should be piano until the voices are equalized in tune and the tone is pleasant. The force may then be somewhat increased, but must never be louder than is consistent with sweetness. (See 28, 29.) **Voice work in 1st year.**

37. **In the second grade** the same method should prevail, and the teacher should endeavor to obtain a little more freedom in vo- **In 2nd year.**

calization, but always within the proper limits.

In 3rd year. 38. **In the third and fourth grades** pupils should be able to sing correctly with medium (mezzo) force, and until this can be done, and individuals understand the force proper for their own voices, louder (or forte) singing should not be attempted.

In 4th year. 39. **In the fourth grade, exercises** should be given for cultivating piano, mezzo and forte singing with correct tone quality.

Grammar grades. 40. **In the upper grades** this practice should continue, using suitable exercises and vocalizes.

First step. 41. By singing softly many faults previously enumerated are apparently avoided. **It is the first step in good voice production,** and teachers who can do no more can at least accomplish this much.

Bad quality latent. 42. **Soft singing, however, may only keep bad quality latent. It does not necessarily cultivate the voice.** Harsh singing is vastly improved by substituting soft singing, but as soon as restraint is removed children who have **merely** sung softly are apt to sing as noisily as before. **Good quality avoids harshness and thickness even when the voice is used freely, and, when power is used, is still characterized by sweetness and purity.** (See 28, 29.)

THE CULTIVATED VOICE

43. **Voice Culture requires good posture (44), including proper relaxation (2) and freedom from tension, controlled breath (47), proper attack of tones (56), legato (58), distinct pronunciation (70) of vowels (61, 72), articulation of consonants (96), and proper phrasing (55, 89, 104).** **Requisites of culture.**

POSTURE

44. **Posture includes both sitting and standing.** Pupils should sit for general practice, but should stand during breathing exercises, the singing of vocalizes, and in the rendering of finished songs. **Proper position.**

45. **Standing.** The pupil should stand easily, erect, chest forward, hips back, the back rather straight and not hollowed, weight balanced on the balls of the feet. One foot may be slightly in advance of the other, and the weight may be shifted from one foot to the other to avoid fatigue. **The music should be so held** that the upper edge of the book is level with the chin. The elbows should not touch the sides. The only tension allowable is the endeavor to keep the upper chest from collapsing with the escaping breath. **How to hold book.**

46. **Sitting.** The pupil should sit erect,

without stiffness, hips pushed back in the seat, the shoulders not touching the back rest. The chest should be sustained as before (6), and the feet placed squarely on the floor.

BREATHING

Faults.

47. Too much breath emitted with the tone gives a husky quality that is fatiguing to the singer. In chronic or acute laryngitis the irregular, swollen state of the vocal bands produces this, and there are many children in our schools with such conditions existing in their throats.

Economy.

48. **To produce the best tone as little breath as possible should be expended.**

49. Forcing the breath in excess tends to sharpen the pitch.

50. A good way to procure economy of breath is to vocalize the scale down and up at least once, and, if possible, twice, on one breath.

Right doing through natural means.

51. **Good voice quality is founded on breathing and breath control.** Fortunately, it is not necessary in children's singing to build up an elaborate system of exercises. Nature has so made us that, **unconsciously, we breathe correctly** when, through some feeling or impulse, we will to express ourselves in some natural act. Thus the act of smelling is normally accom-

panied by a rightly drawn breath. So, if we ask the children to play at blowing bubbles, or any of the plays that employ the breath, they will breathe quite unconsciously, but perfectly, merely in doing what the game demands. This idea can be utilized by the teacher, who can easily invent new ways of coaxing good breaths.

Breath in speech and song.

52. **Speaking and singing are similar** in many respects, and it is difficult to draw the line between them. Speaking is characterized by short vowels and variable pitches; singing, by prolonged vowels and melodic intervals. **Inhalation for singing should be practiced like that for speaking. We breathe, in both cases, simply to do something, to say something, to express some idea.**

Fresh air.

It goes without saying that fresh air is essential for good breathing. The schoolroom should be freely ventilated for the singing just as for physical training.

Natural breathing.

53. **Children, then, should breathe naturally, and the best exercises are the breathings that accompany some pleasurable or playful act,** such as smelling the perfume of a favorite flower, blowing a feather, blowing up a bag, etc. The breathing should not be as violent or forced as in the physical training, and should not be accompanied by raising the shoulders or nois-

ily dragging in the breath. **Inhale naturally and easily through the nose.**

Breath control.

54. **The moderate quantity of breath thus taken in is sufficient** for children's singing. **The important thing, therefore, is to control and economize the breath.** This, too, is easy. Retain the breath by keeping the chest up and forward at the close of inhalation; then, without allowing it to collapse, utter or attack the tone without losing any appreciable amount of breath. The very act of sustaining the tone will then take care of the breath in the lungs, if the singer feels that the tone is being drawn in instead of being pushed out. (Compare 5.)

Phrasing.

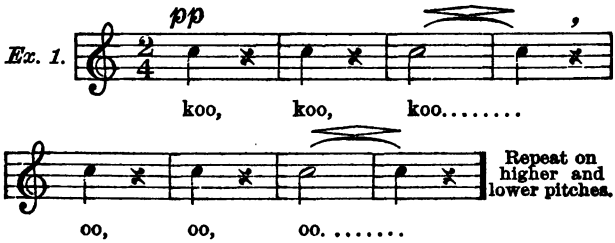
55. Children should be taught to breathe at the natural points in the sentence, **by taking time from the note just preceding.** This makes correct phrasing and good sense.

ATTACK

How to start tones.

56. **Good tone must begin perfectly,** and then it may so continue. An imperfect beginning or attack cannot result in good tone. **The beginning is all important.** To get well-placed tone we must practice starting, beginning or attacking. This, at first, is more important than singing phrases of any length. Thus, with a moderate breath, with chest up (6), and on an appropriate pitch (c third space,

or d), sing, very softly, "koo, koo, koo," the first two being quite short and the third long, to be immediately followed by "oo-oo-oo," each "oo" being detached. Thus:



57. **Perfect attack results when the tone is uttered neatly and cleanly,** without (1) any preliminary escape of breath, or (2) an explosive click (stroke of the glottis), caused by pressing the vocal bands tightly together before the tone is produced. **Faults in attack.**

Correct attack insures proper tone placing, pure intonation, flexibility and spontaneity.

LEGATO

58. **By legato is meant** the sustaining of a tone to the end of its time value, and then passing instantly to the next without carrying or sliding the voice (portamento) through intermediate pitches, thus anticipating the new tone. **The portamento is a very bad habit. The legato is essential to good singing,** and on it depends flexibility and breadth of style. **Portamento.**

SWELLING AND DIMINISHING (MESSA DI VOCE)

Test of voice placing.

59. **The ability gradually to swell and diminish a tone is the strictest test of finished voice placing.** It represents the highest art of the Italian school, and on it depends the power to express emotional states and feelings. Without it there can be no real freedom in emotional expression. Agility is relatively of much less importance.

60. It is best produced, not by pushing out the tone or by tightening the muscles of the throat, but when accompanied, in the crescendo, by a strong feeling of drawing in, or lifting up the tone toward the top of the head.

VOWELS

Variety in tonal quality.

61. **Variety in tone quality** depends upon the individuality imparted by the different vowels. Fundamental tone quality is the same for all vowels, but it is differently colored or modified by the vowel quantity. All vowels should be equally clear, resonant and well placed, while different in character.

Vowels modified.

62. **Vowels are not all equally adapted to the production of good tone** (*e.g.*, ă in man). **Several must be modified whenever possible,** or replaced by

others nearly like them but better adapted for tone production. *E.g.*, the vowel ee, which, in children's voices, is often produced with a thin, reedy, wiry and unblending quality, may be improved by being changed in the middle and low tones to ĭ (as in "pin," "this," etc.), and in the lowest tones to the German ü. On high pitches ee should be sung with the teeth separated and the mouth fairly open.

THE VOWEL OO
(OO AS IN FOOD)

"oo" the best vowel.

63. **This vowel is the mainstay in training children's voices. It is a great help if rightly used,** but too much reliance must not be placed upon it, or the result will be unsatisfactory. **Constant practice limited to this vowel tends to make the tone small, cramped and "hooty." All vowels must be cultivated equally.**

Excessive use of "oo"

64. Nothing is commoner, when children sing harshly, than to find teachers requiring them to practice with "oo." **"Oo-ing," of course, renders the tone soft and pleasant, but usually only while "oo" is being sung.** As soon as the children return to the original exercise with other vowels the tone, in too many cases, is as poor as before, or soon becomes so.

Head voice with "oo."

65. **The vowel "oo," when rightly used, places the tone quality for all other vowels.** This is a device which is within the power of every class teacher to employ. **It is the starting point for our voice training.** The use of this vowel on a high pitch will surely result in the tone being sung in the head voice.

Practice for head voice.

66. The teacher may, therefore, require the children to sing softly the syllable "koo" on the pitch e♭, e or f (fourth space or fifth line). Any normal child can do this, but if there is some hesitation try c or d. (Ex. 1.) Repeat this several times, then from these pitches sing the descending scale, keeping the voice pure and soft, with especial care on the lower tones. **Do not practice the ascending scale until the descending series is well sung.**

Position of lips.

67. **In singing "oo" the lips should be pushed well forward,** without "puckering," and the teeth somewhat separated. The quality should be soft, sweet and fluty.

Breath.

68. **Caution the pupils to sing easily, and "drink in" or "breathe in" the tone very lightly.** This direction should be very constantly given.

All vowels.

69. **Many teachers apparently believe that the above is the substance of voice training. It is, however, only the beginning. The test of finished voice placing is the swelling and diminishing of the tone WITHOUT CHANGE IN QUALITY, and the ability to sing ALL vowels in the same manner.**

PRONUNCIATION

70. **Clear and distinct pronunciation of the text is absolutely necessary.** Hence the voice must be placed correctly on all vowels and in connection with consonants. **The voice is not perfectly trained unless right quality is maintained while singing with free and unimpeded pronunciation.** This is a very necessary factor in the use of the voice.

Vowels best for voice.

71. **The numerous vowel sounds in the language must be carefully classified with regard to their adaptation for good tone production. Pupils should make the most of the round vowels, and avoid or modify the bad ones. Poor vowels invariably produce poor tone,** and the best endeavors will be spoiled by bad vowels.

(Thus ă, as in man, and, etc., is absolutely unfitted for musical use, and must be modified, since it is impossible to make a tone musical on ă.)

THE MUSICAL VOWELS*

72. The best vowels for good singing are the following:

Good singing vowels.

(1) oo, as in "pooh," "too," "tooth."
(2) o, as in "old," "doh," "no."

*The diacritical marks are from Webster's dictionary.

(3) aw, as in "saw," "all," "talk."
(4) *äh, as in "far," "star," "father."
(5) ŏ, as in "of," "on," "orb."
(6) ĕ, as in "peg," "beg," "end."
(7) ĭ, as in "kit," "pin," "bin," "kin."
(8) ee, if sung with open mouth. (Rather doubtful.)

THE UNMUSICAL VOWELS

Modified vowels.

73. (9) ă, as in "man," "and," "at," etc. This sound occurs very frequently, and is wholly unfit for singing. It must be modified to something approaching "ah." (See 62.)

(10) ee, as in "see," "be," "me," "thee," etc. This very common vowel often causes an unpleasant, thin and unblending quality in children's voices. It should be modified so as to remove the thin overtones. (See 62.)

Substitute for ee the sound ĭ ("pin") in middle and lower tones, and "ü" (German) in lowest tones. In the upper voice open the mouth well in singing ee.

(11) a, as in "fate," generally pronounced ay-ee. **This should be modified to ĕ-ĭ.**

---

*This vowel, after the voice is perfectly placed, is by many regarded as all important.

74. The following are poor vowels for voice purposes, but may generally be used without modification.

(12) ŭ, as in such, also "e" in "the" before a consonant. This may sometimes be sung with the sound of "äh" if the tone proves bad on the sound of ŭ.

(13) e, as in "dearth," "her."

(14) i, as in "mirth."

THE MUSICAL DIPHTHONGS

Diphthongs.

75. Prolong the first sound. The second, or vanishing sound, should be short.

(15) i, as in "night." Sing as äh-ĭ, not äh-ee.

(16) oy, as in "toy," "boy." Sing as aw-ĭ, not aw-ee.

(17) ow, as in "how." Sing as äh-oo.

(18) u, as in "music." Sing as ĭ-oo, not ee-oo; so also ew in "new," etc.

(19) a, as in "fate," should be modified to ĕ-ĭ.

Teacher should give models.

76. **The teacher should use good judgment in making these modifications,** and not cause pronunciation to sound forced or ridiculous. **She should carefully pronounce the modified word herself, as a model** or pattern. Many times the vowel needs but a slight change tending to openness.

Words mispronounced.

77. Such words as "here," "clear," "dear," should be of one syllable, thus: hĭr, clĭr, dĭr. They must not be sung as hee-ah, clee-äh, dee-äh.

Necessity for modifications.

78. **The modification of unmusical vowels will help greatly** in securing a beautiful and even tone production. Indeed, **without it such evenness is impossible.** The best singers employ this device.

The round mouth, and use of lips.

79. In using the "singing names" the Tonic Sol-fa pronunciation "doh" and "soh" are helpful. **Pupils should take advantage of all "oh" sounds** to help in good tone production. **The round mouth is so helpful that the lips should be carefully molded into this shape whenever it is possible. The round mouth should be habitual.** This shaping of the lips should precede and anticipate the sounding of the vowel. Neglect of this shaping results in the careless "ă-oh" which children so often substitute for "oh."

Vowel quantity neglected.

80. **Teachers are often unobserving** in regard to faults like this, and do not detect or correct them. While ordinarily they are careful about the articulation of consonants, they seem less able to recognize the common mispronunciation of vowels.

81. Provincialism and uncouthness in language is largely due to wrong vowel quantities. The teacher, therefore, both in speech and song, should always be alert to detect

mistakes, and should carefully correct them by giving good patterns.

82. **Imitation is the natural way, as well as the quickest and best, to gain a right method of vowel utterance**; hence the teacher should be a perfect model, and should give examples carefully for imitation. To impress on the children the necessity for correct position of the vocal organs, methods may be used similar to the lip language of the deaf, the teacher silently forming vowel shapes to be recognized by the class, and to be spoken and sung by them. The vowels may also be whispered. The power gained may then be utilized in the singing.

Imitation.

Lip language.

OO VS. ÄH

83. **Pure singing on the vowel "äh" should follow previous training on the "round" vowels.** To begin with "äh" is not good policy. The preliminary work with children should consist of vocalizing on "oo," following this with "oh" and "aw." Vocalizes may then follow with "ah."

Äh should follow other vowels.

NOTE.—A vocalize is an exercise consisting of arpeggios or scale passages, usually sung with pure vowels, for the purpose of exercising the voice and for obtaining quality of tone, together with flexibility and control.

84. "Ah" is so open and free that the singer needs much skill to keep it lightly poised on the breath, and, without forcing, lifted upward toward the hard palate or the top of the head.

85. As the substance and body of pure tone is given by the vowels, so the meaning of the word is dependent on the consonants which make its skeleton or framework.

Large auditorium.

86. **The larger the auditorium the greater is the care needed in enunciation.**

Articulation of consonants.

87. In singing, the consonants should not be dwelt upon, but should be neatly and "trippingly" uttered with a quick movement of the articulating apparatus.

Syllabization in singing.

88. Because the tone is prolonged on the vowels according to the time value of the notes, the manner of syllabization is, in effect, different in singing from that employed in spelling. To show this, the first stanza of "America" may be represented with modified vowels, thus:

Mă - ĭ	coŭ - n	trĭ.....	'tĭ - -	- sŏ - f	thĭ....,
Swēē - t	lă - nd	ŏ - f	lĭ - -	- bĕ - r	tĭ.....,
Ŏ - f	thĭ.....	ă - ĭ	sĭ - -	- - - -	- - ng;
Lă - nd	whĕ - re	mă - ĭ	fă - -	- thĕ - rs	dă - ĭd,
Lă - nd	ŏ - f	thĕ....	pĭ - -	- lgrĭ - ms'	pră - ĭd,
Frŏ - m	ĕ - -	vrĭ....	mă - -	-ountĕ-n's	să - ĭd,
Lĕ - t	free -	dŏ - m	rĭ - -	- - - -	- - ng.

At first sight this seems rather extreme, but it represents exactly what happens in singing. Neglect by children to prolong the vowel often causes them to shorten tones and to break the time by pronouncing the final consonants too soon.

Final and initial consonants.

89. **From the above it will be seen that in words phrased together the final consonant of one word and the initial consonant of the following word are joined and articulated together.**

This also happens in ordinary conversation, but as the vowels are short it is not so noticeable.

There should be no apparent interval, like a short rest, between the final consonant of one word and the initial of the following in words phrased together, nor should the words be separated by a short u tacked on to the final consonant.

When the final consonant is followed by an initial vowel, the consonant should be so enunciated as to be evidently the end of the first word and not the initial of the second.

Thus, the expression "'tis of thee" should be pronounced so that the s is distinctly a part of "'tis." It should not be

"ti—s̆so—s̆vthĭ";

nor should it be

"ti—s̆o—v̆thĭ";

or this: "ti—sŭ o—vŭ thĭ."

It is sometimes the practice of orators and singers to cause the words to stand somewhat apart, but this is generally unnecessary, unless some particular word is singled out for special stress.

Clearness of utterance in any case depends ultimately upon the neat and perfect articulation of consonants rather than upon separating words with an appreciable hiatus.

In the sängerfest of June 20, 1909, held in Madison Square Garden, New York, the enunciation of the chorus of 3,000 school children was so perfect that every word was distinctly heard in the farthest portions of the great auditorium.

To secure this result the pupils were taught simply to pronounce with care, and to phrase the sentences according to grammatical sense. The words were not cut apart except by the natural pauses.

For teacher only.

Let it be noted that the above rules for final and initial consonants are for the personal guidance of the teacher in order that she may give a perfect pattern for imitation by the children.

If the rules were expounded to children, it is more than likely that they would apply them wrongly. The words,

"sad and lonely,"

might be transformed by them into

sa ʒ dan ʒ dlonely.

If anything like this should happen it would be better to sing

sa-d ♩ and lonely.

Such mistakes are not likely if the teacher gives a correct model.

Opening for "ah."

90. **In singing "äh" the face should be pleasant and smiling, and the mouth fairly opened.** As the tones mount higher the mouth will be more widely opened.

"Aw" instead of "ah."

On account of the inherent difficulty in singing "äh" many teachers substitute for it the dark "aw." "Aw" is produced with the mouth well opened vertically. It is fuller in body of tone and is more easily controlled than the more brilliant "äh."

Position of lips and mouth.

91. **The lips should not be thrust out and separated trumpet-like, and in general it is not well to "open the mouth VERY wide."** Except for high tones, the teeth should be separated about half an inch for "oo" and "oh," and a little more for "aw" and "ah." The injunction to open the mouth very widely is often detrimental except on high tones.

Shape for "oh."

92. **In singing "oh" the opening made by the lips should be quite round,** and the lips, while not touching the teeth, should conceal them.

To obtain the right shape for "oh" take the position for "oo." Keeping the lips forward, open the mouth wider, and, while thinking "oh," utter it.

93. **To make "ŏ" (as in "not"), open the mouth wider than for "oh,"** and, keeping the lips slightly contracted, while thinking "ŏ," sound it.

94. **To obtain "aw"** (as in "law"), open the mouth wider than for "oh" or "ŏ." Then, thinking "aw," pronounce it.

Look pleasant.

95. **Good tone is materially assisted by a pleasant, smiling look,** a condition which is accompanied by a relaxed and open throat. (See 2.)

CONSONANTS

Consonants no hindrance.

96. **Tone production is assisted by good pronunciation.** This is true of the consonants, which should prove a help rather than a hindrance if correctly articulated. If this act is so neatly and quickly done that the breath is not hindered materially in emission, the effort made in articulation will give the necessary pressure to the column of breath, will minimize self-consciousness, and prevent rigidity and contraction of the throat and resonating cavities in tone production.

On the other hand, the best endeavors for tone quality may be spoiled by poor enunciation.

97. **When final and initial consonants come together** the melody halts, unless they are articulated quickly. In the neat use of the articu-

lating parts the teachers should give models for imitation.

98. **The final consonant should not be followed by an involuntary vowel sound** through carelessness or habit. Do not sing "goodŭ," "badŭ," etc.

99. "ing" should not be cut to "in." It is sounded quickly in the nose, with the middle of the tongue touching the roof of the mouth.

g and **d final** should not be sounded too much in the throat, and the latter, as in the German, should resemble t.

l should be vocal, with the tip-tongue touching the roots of the upper front teeth.

n, with the tongue in the same position as for l, is sounded quickly in the nose.

m, with lips lightly closed, is sounded quickly in the nose.

l, n, m and **ng** are sounded on definite pitches.

The same final and initial consonant.

100. **When the final consonant of one word and the initial of the next are the same** it is generally customary to emphasize the consonants more strongly than usual, without separating them. If great distinctness is required they must be articulated separately with a slight interval between the words. Final consonants are just

as essential as initial in word formation; in fact, the identity of the word often depends on them. Hence elisions of consonant sounds that are needed for the complete rounding of the word should not be allowed.

Correlation of voice and language.

101. By care in such particulars as these voice culture and the teaching of language are mutually helpful.

The lessons gained in singing may be, and should be applied in the speaking voice.

BREATHING

Rule.

102. **Breath should not be taken** between syllables of a word or between words closely connected in sense; *e.g.*, a preposition and its object, or an article and its substantive, etc.

How to prolong the breath.

103. **It is surprising how a breath will last** in singing if economy is practiced, the chest kept up, and the drinking-in sensation is felt. An interesting exercise for this purpose is to breathe easily, hold the breath an instant, and then monotone softly and slowly, on a medium pitch, the numbers from 1 to 10, 1 to 15, 1 to 20, etc. By practice this counting may be increased to considerably larger numbers. This may be varied by singing, softly and quickly, several short "oo's," followed by a long one. The length of this exercise and the number of sounds sung may be increased from time to

Intoning numbers.

time by adding other short "oo" sounds. Other vowels may be treated similarly.

PHRASING

Phrasing a matter of breathing.

104. **Correct phrasing is a corollary of correct breathing,** as it simply means breathing in the right places. As in speaking, the series of words which are closely connected in sense are separated by short pauses from other series, so, in singing, the phrases are separated by short intervals in which the breath is taken. Breath should be taken at such times and in such a way that the phrases make good sense. The hymn, "Lead, Kindly Light," for instance, requires considerable care in this regard.

105. Breath may be taken at any place when a comma, or stop of larger significance, is employed.

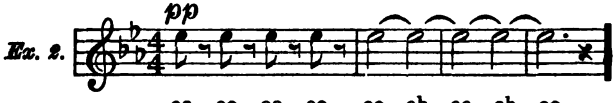
EXERCISES FOR PRACTICE

106. **Voice training may be said to be well begun when the head voice has been secured by singing "oo" on a high pitch,** as of d̄, ē-flat or ē. (15). The quality thus obtained should be extended down with descending scale passages on "oo," and **blended with the middle and lower tones without allowing thick and hard qualities to be**

Retain same tone color.

added. The tones thus sung will grow softer as the voice descends. The sound of "oo" should then be blended into "oh" (thus oo-oh) by retaining the quality obtained on "oo" and adding the vowel shape and sound of "oh" without adding any new quality or color.

107. To do this, move back and forth from "oo" to "oh" on a single prolonged tone, keeping the voice quality absolutely unchanged. Thus:



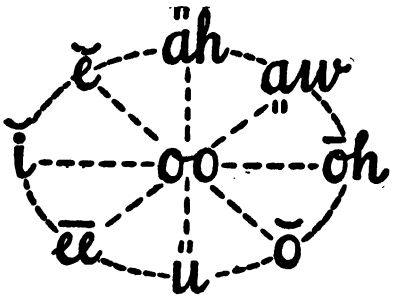
Ex. 2.

oo, oo, oo, oo, oo..oh..oo..oh..oo
oo.. ŏ ..oo.. ŏ ..oo
oo..ạw..oo..ạw..oo
oo..ăh..oo..ăh..oo
oo.. ĕ ..oo.. ĕ ..oo
oo.. ĭ ..oo.. ĭ ..oo
oo..ēē..oo..ēē..oo
oo.. ŭ ..oo.. ŭ ..oo

108. When certain of correct quality on "oh," **sing descending scale passages with "oh,"** as was done with "oo." Sing also in keys of D, E and F.

109. **Do the same severally with the vowels ō, aw, äh, ĕ, ĭ, ee, ŭ.** Lead into each vowel from "oo," as in Ex. 2, before beginning the descending scale passages. In this way the head quality will be continued from "oo" into the other vowels.

110. The following diagram may be placed on the board for drill with pointer:



Giving a suitable pitch from the pitch instrument, have the children sing the vowels in monotone as the pointer moves from "oo" to "oh" and back to "oo," etc. Insist that the only perceptible difference shall be merely that of the vowel quantity. Do the same with the other vowels, thus: oo-a̤w-oo; oo-ŏ-oo; oo-äh-oo; oo-ĕ-oo; oo-ĭ-oo; oo-ü-oo; oo-ēē-oo (in the latter not allowing thin vibrations to creep in). (See 73 (10).)

111. **In using the pointer do not make any uncertain or slow movements,** but pass directly to the new position. In monotoning, insist that the pitch shall be perfectly maintained.

112. When the blending of these vowels with "oo" is well accomplished, then, beginning with "oo," **move the pointer around the cir-** **Blending.**

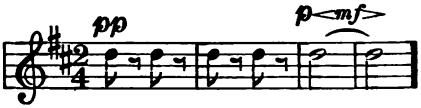
cle in various combinations, often coming back to "oo" in order to test the quality.

113. Do this upon all pitches in the descending scale, beginning as high as ē-flat, being particularly careful on the middle and lower tones not to allow any foreign, new, hard, or forced qualities to be added to that obtained by singing "oo."

"Messa di voce."

114. With the experience thus gained the following exercise for swelling the tone may be attempted, at first on rather high pitches, gradually lowering them. (See 59.)

Ex. 4.



Repeat on lower pitches as far down as ḡ.

oo,	oo,	oo,	oo,	oo.....
ōh,	ōh,	ōh,	ōh,	ōh.....
ŏ,	ŏ,	ŏ,	ŏ,	ŏ.....
aw,	aw,	aw,	aw,	aw....
ah,	ah,	ah,	ah,	ah.....
ĭ,	ĭ,	ĭ,	ĭ,	ĭ.....
ĕ,	ĕ,	ĕ,	ĕ,	ĕ.....
ēē,	ēē,	ēē,	ēē,	ēē.....

(with open mouth)

115. N. B. As the sound is gradually swelled do not allow any new or foreign quality or color to be added, especially on medium and lower pitches. Discover the individual pupils who thus sing wrongly and give them particular attention. (See 35.)

NASAL TONES

116. **These disagreeable sounds are caused by the relaxation of the soft palate.** They may be detected by singing with the nostrils closed, which greatly increases the nasal effect. **Vocalizing with closed nostrils is a cure** for this fault unless it is caused by obstructive diseases of the nose or throat or other malformations. **Remedy for nasal tones.**

117. As soon as the voice is well placed on exercises like the foregoing, vocalizes should be used which will admit of greater freedom. **In these the legato should be observed.** (See 58.)

118. **Vocalizes in general should consist of descending arpeggios or scale passages combined with upward skips.** They may be taught by rote or by note. (See my "Manual of School Music"* for a considerable variety of these.) **Vocalizes and how taught.**

119. **Daily practice is essential,** and as tone quality is the first requisite, the teacher should insist upon getting it. Encourage individual singing by each member of the class. This can be worked up from small beginnings. (See "Manual of School Music.") **Individual singing.**

120. In sight reading with sol-fa syllables the tone quality is very likely to be poor, as pupils are so intent upon tone relation and **Voice quality in sol-faing.**

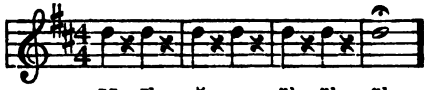
*Manual of School Music, by Frank R. Rix. The Macmillan Co., N. Y.

rhythm. Have them sing rather softly, enunciating the consonants quickly, and modifying the sounds of "ee" and "ă" as previously recommended. (See 71-74.) The syllables will then be: doh, tĭ, läh, soh(l), fäh, mĭ, rĕ, doh.

The chromatics will be: dĭ, rĭ, fĭ, sĭ, lĭ, and tĕ-ĭ, lĕ-ĭ, sĕ-ĭ, mĕ-ĭ, räh.

121. Additional exercises for tone attack. (See 56, 57.)

Ex. 5.

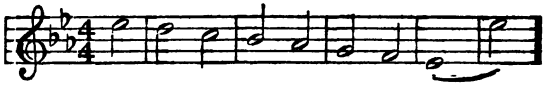


Use also lower and higher keys.

ōō, ōh, ŏ, aw, äh, äh, äh
oo, oh, ah, ĕ, ĭ, oh, oo
oo, ĭ, ĕ, ah, oh, ŏ, aw
etc.

122. Sing the modified vowels on the descending scale. The order of the vowels may be varied, ending on a different one each time.

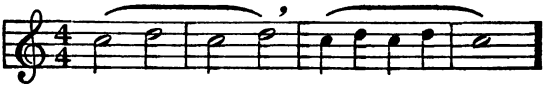
Ex. 6.



oo, oh, ŏ, aw, ah, ĕ, ĭ, oo.....
oo, oh, ah, ĕ, ĭ, ŏ, aw, ah.....

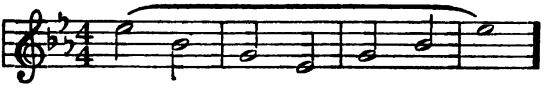
123. Exercise for legato. (See 58.) Vary the keys.

Ex. 7.



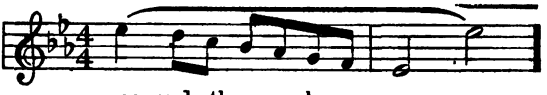
oo.....	oo.....
oh.....	oh.....
ŏ.....	ŏ.....
aw	aw .....
ah.....	ah.....
ĕ	ĕ.....
ĭ...	ĭ.....
ee	ee.....

Ex. 8.



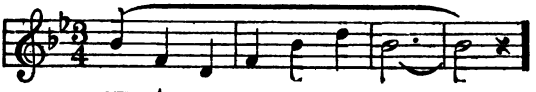
oo,
Also all vowels.

Ex. 9.



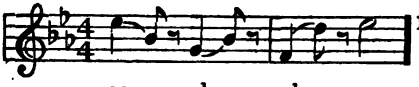
oo, and other vowels.

Ex. 10.



aw, etc.

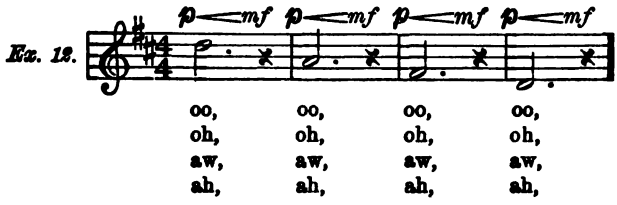
Ex. 11.

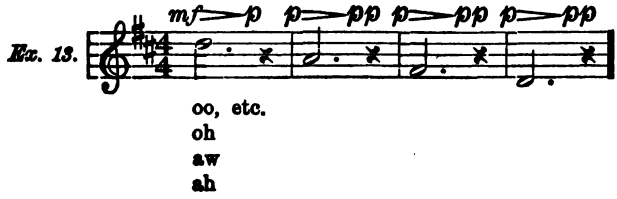


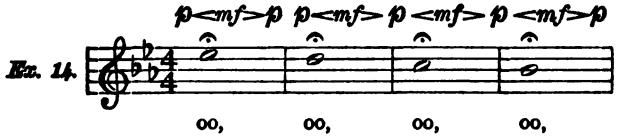
Do not slide the voice (see 58).

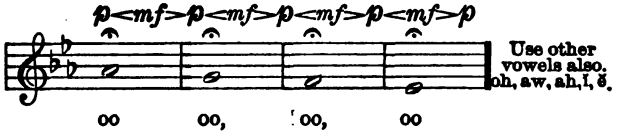
oo, oh, ah, oo
Lovely, sweetly, softly sing.

124. Exercises for swelling and diminishing tone. (See 59.)





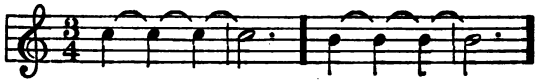




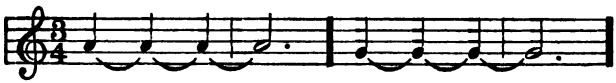
125. Exercise for testing head tone on vowels. (See 106-110.) Pass from "oo" to other vowels without interrupting the tone,

and without allowing any new or foreign element to enter, except vowel shape. Manage the lips carefully. (See 91-95.)

Ex. 15.



oo..oh..oo..oh oo..oh..oo..oh
oo..aw..oo..aw
oo.. ŏ ..oo.. ŏ
oo..ah..oo..ah
oo.. ĭ ..oo.. ĭ
oo.. ĕ ..oo.. ĕ
oo..ee..oo..ee
oo.. ŭ ..oo.. ŭ
oo..oh..aw..ah
oo..ah.. ĕ ..ee
oo..ee..oh..ah
ah.. ĕ .. ĭ ..oo
ĭ .. ĕ ..ee..oo
ee.. ĕ ..ah..oo
etc.



oo...oh...oo... oh oo...oh...oo... oh

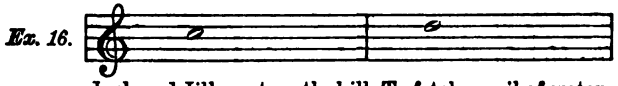
PRONOUNCING WITH SINGING TONE.

126. Select any poetical stanza desired, and sing each line upon a single pitch (like the reciting tone of a chant). Change the pitch for each line. Be careful that the pitch is perfectly sustained. Phrase, as well as pro-

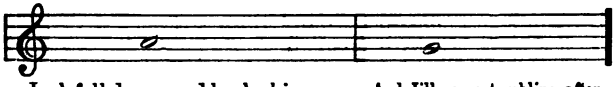
Monotoning lines of poetry for enunciation.

nounce, perfectly. At first, make the vowels short, as in speaking. Then prolong the vowels, *e.g.:*

Ex. 16.



Jack and Jill went up the hill, To fetch a pail of water,

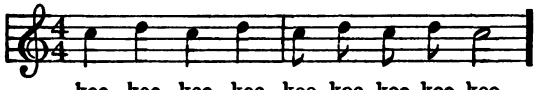


Jack fell down, and broke his crown, And Jill came tumbling after.

Ex. 17. Practice the pronunciation of difficult words in songs, using singing tone.

127. Exercise for mobility, flexibility and tone placing. Increase the speed gradually.

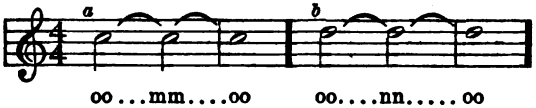
Ex. 18.



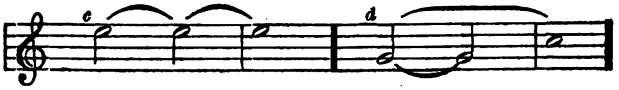
koo, koo, koo, koo, koo, koo, koo, koo, koo
pah, etc.
ko, etc.
kah, etc.

128. Exercise for m, n, ng and l. Continue the pitch unchanged through both vowel and consonant.

Ex. 19.



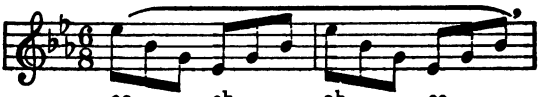
oo...mm....oo	oo....nn..... oo
oh...mm....oh	oh....nn..... oh
aw...mm....aw	aw....nn.....aw
ah...mm....ah	ah....nn..... ah
ĭ....mm.... ĭ	ĭ ....nn..... ĭ



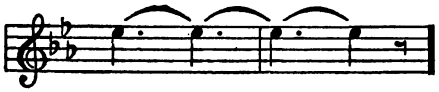
oo.....ll.....oo oo.....ng.....oo
oh.....ll.....oh oh.....ng.....oh
aw.....ll.....aw ah.....ng.....ah
ah.....ll.....ah ĭ.....ng.....ĭ
ee.....ll.....ee ee.....ng.....ee

129. For flexibility and vowel practice.

Ex. 20.



oo..... oh..... ah.....ee.....
oo..... ŏ.....ah.....ĭ.....
oo..... aw.....ah.....aw.....



Also in C, D, E and F.

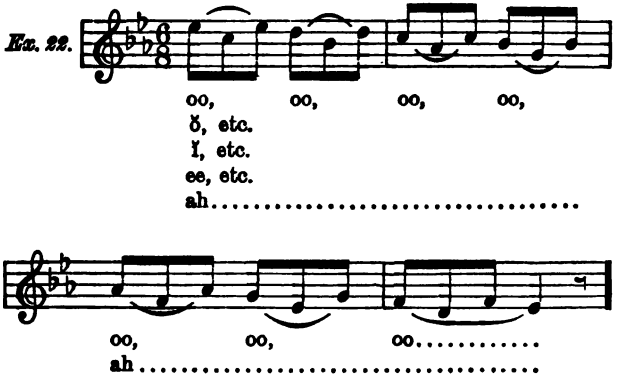
oo.....oh.....ah.....ee
oo.....ŏ.....ah.....ĭ
oo.....aw.....ah.....aw

Ex. 21.

ah, ah, ah, ah,
oh, oh, oh, oh,
aw, etc.
ah.....

ah, ah, ah.....
oh, oh, oh.....
ah .....

Ex. 22.



VOICE TRAINING EXERCISES

Daily practice.

130. Such exercises, to be of value, should be thoroughly familiar, and should be used frequently. For this purpose a few examples are sufficient. The best singers find that a half dozen vocalizes are about all that are needed for practice, but these must be used daily.

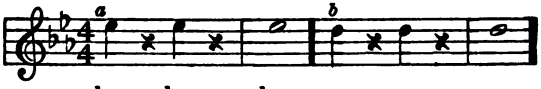
To begin the lesson.

131. **The lesson should begin with a short breathing exercise, followed by a vocalize.** For this the children should stand in the proper position (45). The hands should hang naturally, and should not be folded behind the back. When children have acquired the habit of breathing easily, this part of the lesson may sometimes be omitted.

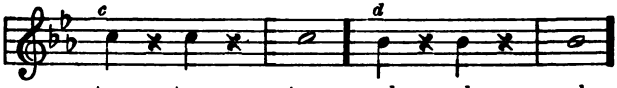
132. **The vocal exercises or vocalizes should be adapted to the age of the pupils and to the condition of their voices.** For lower grades they should be very simple, consisting of descending-scale passages or arpeggios sung with various vowels, such as oo, oh, äh, aw, ĕ, ĭ. A few types follow:

Adapt work to grade and age.

Ex. 23.



koo, koo, koo, po, po, po,
oo, oh, ah, oo, ŏ, aw,



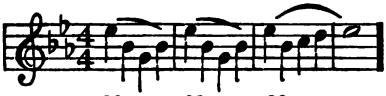
taw, taw, taw, pah, pah, pah
oo, ĭ, ee, oo, ah, oh

Ex. 24.

Also in D and C.

oo..... oo.....
oh..... oh.....
ah..... ah.....
ĭ..... ĭ.....
ŏ..... ŏ.....

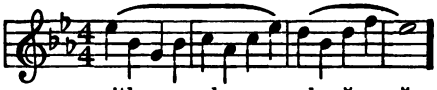
Ex. 25.



Also in D and C, and with oh, ah, aw, ĭ, ŏ.

oo.... oo.... oo.....
ah.....

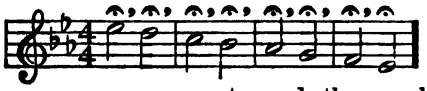
Ex. 26.



Sing also in D and C.

with oo, oh, aw, ah, ŏ, ĭ

Ex. 27.



Also in D and C.

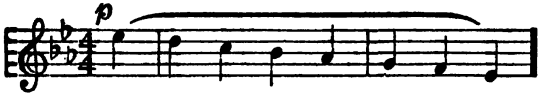
oo, oo, oo, etc., and other vowels.

How to sing vocalizes.

134. Note.—**Vocalizes should be sung at a moderate speed,** neither fast nor slow. If sung too rapidly the tones are blurred, the legato is destroyed, and little is gained.

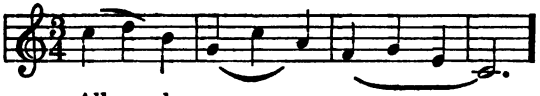
135. Grades III and IV.

Ex. 28.



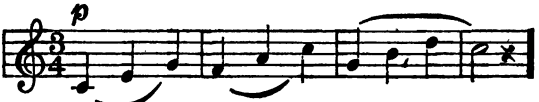
oo.....
oh.....
aw .....
ah.....
etc.

Ex. 29.



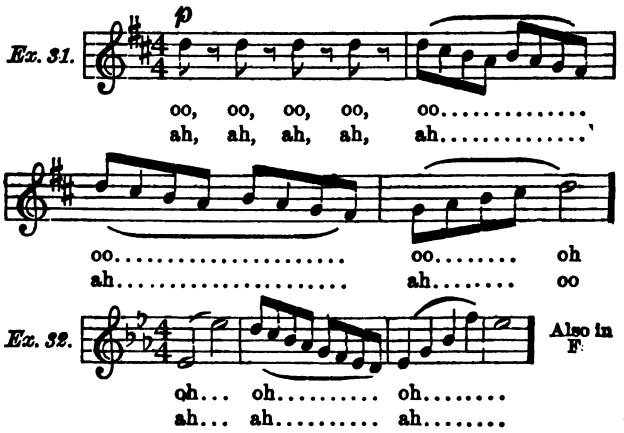
All vowels.

Ex. 30.

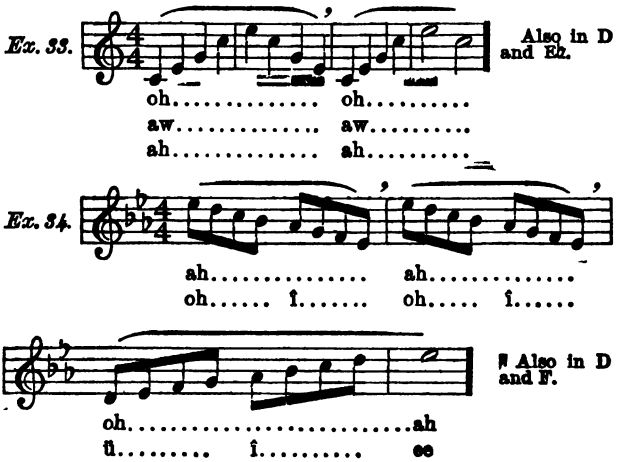


All vowels.

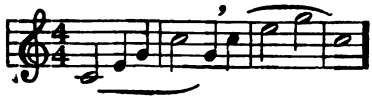
136. Grades IV and V.



137. Grades V and VI; also sopranos in VII and VIII.



Ex. 35.

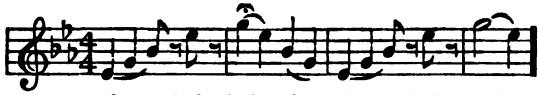


Also in B♭ and D♭, with ah, aw, etc.

Other vocalizes of similar character may also be used.

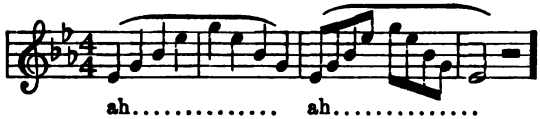
138. Sopranos, Grades V, VI, VII, VIII. Exercises for blending the small and upper thin registers. The slight break should be covered by bringing the small register down.

Ex. 36.



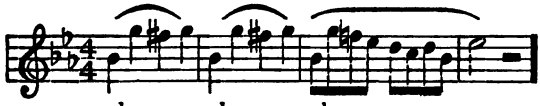
ah... hah, hah, ah ah... hah, hah

Ex. 37.



ah..... ah.....
oh..... oh.....

Ex. 38.



ah..... ah..... ah.....
oh..... oh..... oh.....
aw..... aw..... aw.....

Ex. 39.

ah.....
oh.....

Ex. 40.

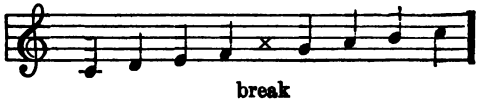
ah.....
oh.....
aw.....

BLENDING THE REGISTERS OF HEAD AND CHEST

Overcoming the break.

139. The head register is developed by first insisting upon soft singing and by constant practice in the upper part of the voice, starting with the sound of "oo." If soft singing could always be the rule there would be no trouble with the "break" between registers. **Since mezzo and forte singing is also demanded, means must be taken for strengthening the head tone and for blending the upper with the lower register.**

The principal break should occur at about f or g.



break

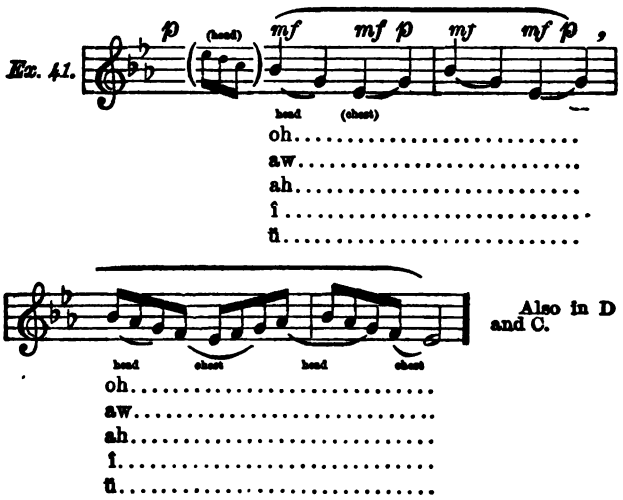
By forcing the tone this position may be pushed higher. (See 24.)

HEAD TO CHEST

140. **It is necessary, therefore, to practice crossing the break** from the head or thin register into a soft and mellow quality in the chest register.

141. The two following exercises are useful for this, especially for altos in grades (VI), VII and VIII, but may be useful for sopranos also in acquiring the low tones which they may be required to sing.

Ex. 41.



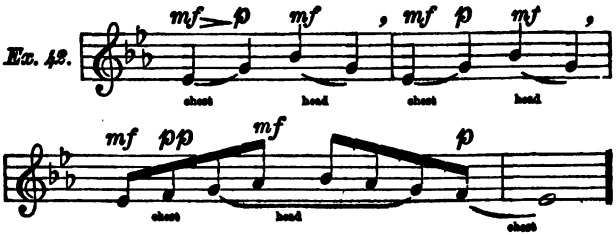
Also in D and C.

Crossing the break.

In the above exercise, if it is necessary in order to secure the head tone, the voice may be led down from ē-flat through the small notes.

CHEST TO HEAD

142. The following should be sung with similar vowels to the above. **Diminish the power of the chest tone just before passing into the head register.**



The chest tone used should be mellow in quality, not hard, rather large, and produced with a yawning sensation. This quality is needed to give substance and body to the lower tones, because the head tone, when carried low, is very feeble and small. The head tone is not effective below f, first space.

Right quality for chest voice.

MATURING VOICES.

143. **The principles thus far enunciated are suitable for children of 8 to 14 years of age.** As children grow older, changes take place that must be considered.

Differentiation.

144. **Girls' voices grow somewhat lower in range** and become differentiated into soprano, mezzo-soprano and contralto. This must be allowed for in the keys used in practicing vocalizes and in songs.

Manner of training the changed voice.

145. **Boys' voices become fuller, and finally** "change" to the voice of manhood. **The exercises given for unchanged voices are not suitable for changed voices, which are trained in an entirely different way.**

THE CHANGING VOICE OF THE BOY

Treatment.

146. A rather difficult problem is presented by the fact that a great change takes place in the voice of the boy when he passes from childhood to youth. His voice then becomes lower in pitch; in short, is transformed to that of manhood; and this fact must be the basis of a different treatment and training.

Practical questions.

147. Several practical questions arise. **Should the boy sing soprano until the voice "breaks"? Should he sing during the period of uncertain control** that accompanies the process of mutation? **How shall the changed voice be treated?**

Usual custom.

148. Until recently the general custom has been to keep the boy on the soprano as long as he can sing it. Some boys are even kept singing when they are merely using the falsetto which remains after mutation.

149. Many teachers advise entire rest from singing during the changing period. **Others say that the voice may be used softly within a small range. Experience shows that the majority of boys can do this,** but in individual cases where the voice changes rapidly, and is wholly uncontrolled, it should rest for a time. **The changing period.**

150. **The voices that have finally settled into baritones, and more rarely into tenors and basses, should be treated like adult male voices.**

151. It is necessary, however, whenever the voices of boys or of girls show decided tendencies toward becoming high or low, **that they should be carefully classified, and should be placed on the part that is appropriate.** This classification will be governed by the quality and fullness of individual voices and by the upper and lower range within which they can produce tones easily. **Classification of voices.**

152. **Girls with full quality,** who can sing the low tones without forcing, and are limited in the upper voice, **should sing alto or second soprano.** **Girls' voices.**

Girls with weak low tones and easily produced upper voice **should sing soprano.**

The altos and second sopranos should not, as too often happens, sing in the thick, hard tones of the chest voice, but in the manner described in 141, with mellow and rather large tones, not forced or pushed.

153. In this classification the needs of the

voice, rather than the desire of the girls, should determine the part they sing. **No pupil should be allowed to sing so high as to cause strain.**

Unison songs.

154. **There should be,** of course, enough **unison singing** to satisfy the wish of every pupil to join in the melody.

Returning to the subject of the boy's voice, it is to be noted that we have not discussed, as yet, a very important and vital question.

Singing soprano till the change of voice.

155. **It is a serious matter whether or not the boy should be allowed to sing soprano till the break occurs.** If permitted to do this the change, very frequently, is sudden, and results in a total incapacity for some time. Boys who sing professionally in choirs are tempted to continue even when they feel difficulty in doing so, and choir masters dislike to give up these singers when they seem most able.

When to stop singing soprano.

156. **The future usefulness of the voice must always be considered,** and I believe that the majority of boys should cease singing soprano, except in unison songs, at least a year before it is reasonable to expect the change. **All boys in the seventh year, for a part of the time, at least, should become accustomed to using the voice in the lower register,** in the manner previously described (141), that is, the mellow, unforced chest blended with the lower thin. The pitches from c, third space, to g below the staff should be practiced, and vocalizes used within

these limits. This is a contralto or tenor range, and the boys may sometimes sing unison songs of contralto character. The classified alto-tenors should sing the low-voice part in three-part songs.

When to sing alto.

157. Whatever may be the opinion about adopting the above method with soprano boys, there is no doubt that whenever a boy finds it difficult to produce the high tones he should be placed among the altos, and become a useful member of that division.

Alto-tenor.

158. **The boy's voice, thus used, may very well be termed alto-tenor,** or tenor even, since the part as sung is practically a tenor and in a tenor range. In fact, the tenor part of any chorus may be sung by these boys if the tones do not exceed the low g of the tenor voice.

Common register.

159. **In all voices,** whether of men, women or children, basses, tenors, contraltos or sopranos, **there is an octave of tones from g to $\bar{g}$ which are common to all,** being identical in pitch, and which are produced in the chest register. It is within this range that the alto-tenor should be principally employed. It is a field common both to the unchanged and changed voice. Hence, whether the voice is changed or not, the boy may be singing on tones that cannot injure either condition. Before the change he is preparing for it, and when it arrives he comes gradually into the perma-

nent condition of his adult voice. If this is baritone or bass the range will gradually descend while losing a few upper tones. If his voice becomes tenor, which under this treatment is very possible, the range will be unchanged. In either case the tones from g to $\bar{e}$ or $\bar{f}$ should remain constant.

F-clef.

160. The boy, too, should meanwhile have learned to read in the F-clef as well as the G-clef.

Alternation on parts.

161. This method of using the common register, which has so much to commend it, not the least of which is the willingness, interest and desire of the boys, should not be adopted too early. Boys, if of normal development, should be required to sing soprano until at least the seventh year in school, in the majority of cases; and in part songs up to that time the voices should be equal, and should be alternated on the upper and lower parts.

Sopranos and altos in seventh and eighth years.

162. In the seventh and eighth years, therefore, it will not be necessary to put all the boys on the alto. That procedure will depend very largely upon their physiological age or condition rather than their chronological age. Boys who are obviously not near the age of mutation, and whose voices are quite unimpaired, may be allowed to continue on the soprano, but they should be under the careful observation of the teacher, and

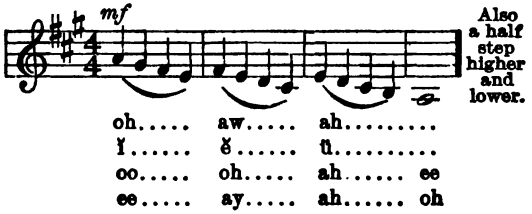
the change of part should be made whenever there is the slightest indication of its need.

During these years, however, the soprano boys should practice carefully the low tones, as well as the high, both in their vocalizes and in unison songs.

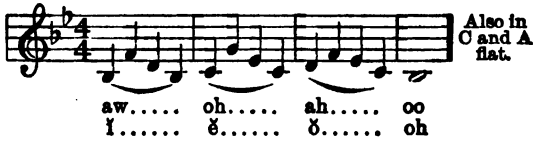
163. Neither alto-tenors nor sopranos should be allowed to sing in the hard, forced chest quality.

164. Vocalizes for alto-tenor. (Grades VII and VIII.)

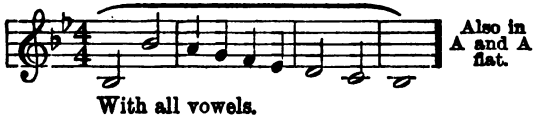
Ex. 43.



Ex. 44.



Ex. 45.



THE CHANGED VOICE

Real tenors.

165. **If the voice, after changing, should prove to be a tenor,** its fortunate possessor should never be allowed to force it, but he should continue to sing with mild, mellow and agreeable quality throughout the entire range, in the manner advised for alto-tenors.

Encourage talent.

Such pupils should be encouraged to continue voice training with competent private instructors. The same is true of boys with good baritone and bass voices. It should be remembered that our future singers and artists will come from the ranks of the school children, and talented pupils should be properly guarded and encouraged.

THE BARITONE AND BASS VOICE

Principles of training for basses and baritones.

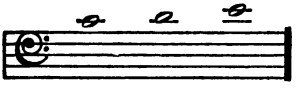
166. **The bass and baritone voices of youth must be trained on exercises and principles just the opposite of those for unchanged voices.** In the latter the endeavor has been to lead the head voice down and to avoid the thick quality of the chest register.

Teachers who do not understand this difference often continue training changed voices in the same way as sopranos. This is entirely wrong.

167. **The characteristic of the bass voice is full and free vibration, founded upon chest resonance reinforced by bright overtones.** These tones have the sensation of originating in the chest or pharynx, and of being focussed in the front of the mouth, against the hard palate. The location of this resonance seems to go deeper into the chest as the pitch descends, **while the focus is always forward in the mouth.** **Chest voice of basses.**

168. **As the pitch rises** the tones become fuller until they completely fill the mouth, growing more powerful in the upper chest register. **Upper chest.**

169. **In well cultivated voices the tones above b (first space above F-clef) are sung in the covered or mixed quality.** This refines the upper tones and eliminates the shouting, bawling quality of the upper chest which is likely to characterize the tones on c, d and e above, viz.: **Mixed voice.**



170. By proper training the mixed voice may be brought still lower, and blended with the middle tones of the bass register so as to make a homogeneous series.

The well-trained singer can produce at will in the upper range any degree from the open chest to the closed or covered tones of the mixed voice. In this range the upper tones **Voice control.**

of the baritone and the same tones in a full tenor (tenor robusto) are quite similar.

Help by imitation.

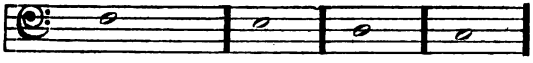
171. **Boys, when learning to use their changed voices, may receive the greatest help by imitating a teacher with a good bass voice.** Imitation of this kind gives them the confidence that results in good singing almost at once.

Training for basses.

172. **The voice training for basses should begin upon a medium pitch,** such as e-flat or f, and the exercises should lead down and up from this center.

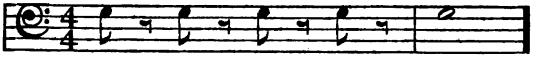
173. Vocal drills and vocalizes for baritone and bass.

Ex. 46.



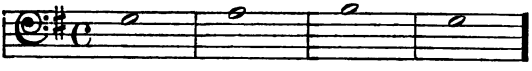
ee..ay..ah..oh..oo, etc.
oo..oh..ah..ay..ee, etc.

Ex. 47.



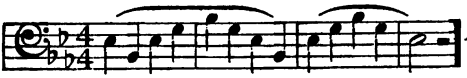
up,	up,	up,	up,	ăh
ŭ,	ŭ,	ŭ,	ŭ,	ăh
ĭt,	ĭt,	ĭt,	ĭt,	ēē
ĭ,	ĭ,	ĭ,	ĭ,	ēē
pay,	pay,	pay,	pay,	ĕ..ĭ
ĕ,	ĕ,	ĕ,	ĕ,	ĕ..ĭ

Ex. 48.



m..ay,	m..ay,	m..ay,	m..ay
n..oh,	n..oh,	n..oh,	n..oh
n..ah,	n..ah,	n..ah,	n..ah

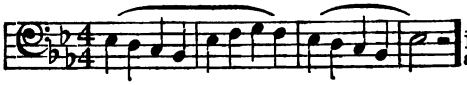
Ex. 49.



Also in F.

ĭ..... ĭ.....
ĕ ..... ĕ .....
ēē..... oh..... ah.....

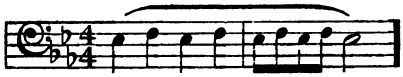
Ex. 50.



Also in D, F, G and A♭.

ee.....
ay.....
ah.....
oh.....
oo.....

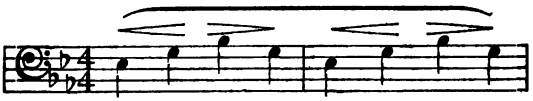
Ex. 51.



Also beginning on all pitches from B♭ to B♭ above.

ah.....
ay.....
ee.....
aw .....

Ex. 52.



ĕ.....
aw.....
ah.....
oh.....

Also in D, C, B♭ and F.

ĕ.....
aw .....
ah .....
oh .....

INDIVIDUAL SINGING

Need of individual singing.

174. **If the teacher would gain the best results she should accustom the children to sing alone,** beginning with short, easy phrases, and utilizing the more confident pupils. No one should be neglected, however. The diffident should be carefully and tactfully guided. In schools even where the tone quality of the class is good it will be found that children when singing alone are very apt, through shyness, to use the voice badly. This should be overcome by the confidence aroused through frequently singing alone.

IMITATION AND PATTERNING

175. The woman's voice is rarely adapted for imitation by children, and the man's voice not at all, unless, as sometimes happens, he can sing a good falsetto.

Imitation of good voices.

The results gained by pupils through imitation of other children who sing correctly will prove a great help to the teacher, and will save a deal of explanation and drill.

176. **In nearly every class individual tests will discover** several children, boys preferably, who can sing with a fine, round and fluty head tone.

177. **Such children should be seated in a group,** and should frequently be called upon to sing for imitation by the others. The imitative faculty is so great that the group of good singers will soon become larger, until finally all the voices are characterized by the same quality. **Grouping good singers.**

178. **The grouping of good voices is very important,** and these should be required quite often to act as models while the rest of the class listens. **Good voices, when located among poor voices, will themselves degenerate.** Bad example should not destroy the good, and by grouping the good voices together they become mutually helpful, and influence the poor voices most effectively. **Bad example pernicious.**

179. **The ability of children to sing alone will** encourage them to sing their school songs at home for the pleasure of their parents. Moreover, knowing the sound of their own voices, they will be less inclined to imitate the harsh tones of vaudeville and open-air vocalists. The parents, too, need the education and the joy which the little ones can bring them, and will greatly appreciate it. **Singing out of school.**

COMPASS OF THE CHILD VOICE

180. **The limits of the child voice are open to question.** Boys and girls with trained voices **Possible and practical limits.**

may sing occasionally as high as b-flat or c above the staff, and several tones below it, but, in general, it is a good rule that they should avoid extremes, singing neither very high nor very low.

Untrained voices should not sing above f (fifth line) or below c (first line below).

Children, up to the third or fourth year in school, should not sing below $\bar{c}$ or above $\bar{\bar{g}}$, the tones generally lying in the range of the treble staff. In other words, they should sing within the head voice and the tones with which it blends, without forcing, in the low register.

Classified voices.

181. When voices are classified in higher grades the altos and alto-tenors may occasionally sing as low as a-flat or g below the staff.

182. Before being taught to use the head tone the child's voice is limited to the chest register in ordinary singing.

Young children.

Young children usually show no marked difference in range, being generally soprano. Exceptions must be dealt with individually.

PART SINGING

Powers required.

183. Part singing requires strong power of concentration, and hence, unless of simple character, is unsuitable for the younger children.

Care for the under voice.

The strictest attention should be given to voice production in the under voice. Children should

be alternated on upper and under parts. Part singing may easily be destructive of good tone production. No young child should habitually sing on the lower part, and a suitable number of unison songs should be used in every grade.

Unison vs. part singing.

184. Good unison singing is better than poor part singing, but part singing should also be good. If conditions are such that good part singing is possible, unison singing will also be well done.

Need of unison songs.

185. **All children should memorize, and sing tunefully, with voices in unison, the standard patriotic, national and folk songs of our own country.** They may add songs of other nations, of the national or folk-song type, together with standard classical songs that are of universal interest. Such music will be of life-long value, and whatever else may be used, whether for studies, or for recreative or exhibition purposes, every child has the right to know, and should be able to sing, the words and melodies of his own national songs.

Patriotic and folk songs.

Value of part singing.

186. **The ability to sing tunefully in parts makes for culture,** and gives the power to join in childhood and in adult life in the rich choral music of the masters.

Dangers in part singing.

187. **There are a number of dangers to be considered in part singing.** The effort to secure singing in parts may result in too much time

being spent upon it to the neglect of other things that make for progress. The part singing, which should be the result of such progress, may become a hindrance if it is attempted before the children have gained sufficient ability in the sight reading of unison songs and exercises, and if they lack the needed powers of concentration and of inhibition that make part singing easily possible.

Part singing at the expense of the voice.

188. **There is a great temptation for teachers** to keep children who are good readers on the alto part, in order in this way to insure the part singing. This practice is almost invariably at the expense of right use of the voice. Pupils, both girls and boys, who are habitually given the alto almost invariably use the thick chest tone which is so objectionable. Moreover, the effort to sing part songs results in a neglect of unison songs, in which the tone quality can be carefully looked after by the class teacher.

Too much time devoted if part song is too difficult.

189. It happens too often that part songs are selected for practice that are of too great difficulty for easy singing, with the result that a long time is spent in learning them. If the same children sing for any length of time on the lower part they are very likely to be using the voice wrongly all that time. This should not be permitted.

190. **The remedy is obvious. First, unison singing must not be neglected. Second, in part singing (before the voices are classified in the upper grades) the altos of one day should be the sopranos of the next, and vice versa. Third, part songs should not be chosen for class work that require extraordinary effort or a long time to master.** Such songs should be adapted to the easy capacity of pupils, and the voices should be alternated from day to day so that voice quality may not degenerate through the inability of the teacher to judge the lower part, or through the natural tendency of children to use the thick tone on low pitches. **Remedies.**

191. **Part songs in the under voice should contain fewer difficulties in reading than the unison work of which the class is capable,** since in part singing is added the difficulty of sustaining one melody while another is being sung. **In classes where much time is required for mastering a part song the teacher should select examples of less difficulty.** Unless or until the class is especially proficient the whole class may read the alto part first, and then the soprano part, before uniting them. The parts may then be alternated at will.

192. This procedure is easier for the average teacher than studying both parts together, and she can then give attention to the voice production on the lower part, while the **Easier for the class teacher.**

alternation of the parts prevents the bad effect of singing too long in the lower register.

193. The danger here pointed out is not imaginary or theoretical. It is altogether too common in practice, and may neutralize the best efforts of those who are working to train good voices.

SEATING IN GROUPS OF RELATIVE ABILITY

Good singers and poor.

194. **When children first enter the grades great differences are apparent** in their singing, dependent largely upon their previous experience. Children who are imitative, and who can sing with sweet voices, should be seated together for mutual help. They should not be promiscuously placed, with poor voices and monotones mixed in, as the latter will have the effect of spoiling the good singers. Monotones should be grouped together at the front for the teacher's observation and help. The indifferent singers may be placed between them and the good voices.

Monotones.

This acts favorably in two ways. The poor singers hear the good, and may take pattern from them, and the good are not so much annoyed by the poor.

Grouping

195. **The group of good singers will form a splendid working force.** These children should be taught the rote songs while the poorer

singers and monotones listen. When thus instructed the singing group will be an excellent model for the others to imitate. **The latter should not be allowed to sing with the good ones all the time,** but should listen, and try to do the same kind of work. Gradually the poor singers will become better and will join the regular choir; and the majority of the monotones also, with experience and rightly directed attention, will come out of their cocoons, and prove to be as fine and beautiful as their fellows. The few bad cases should receive individual care and training, and medical treatment if it is indicated.

Poor singers should sometimes keep silent.

COMMON FAULTS

196. A few words may not be out of place regarding faults in children's singing.

197. **Slurring and scooping.** Among these are slurring, carrying the voice, and scooping the tone. All are the result of the anticipation of tones and not attacking them in perfect tune and in exact time. Often the vowel is not held true to the end of the time value of the note, and the voice begins to hunt for the next sound through intermediate pitches. "**Scooping**" is caused by striking below the true pitch and then pushing the voice up to it. It

Cause and remedy.

is very disagreeable to the listener and very tiring to the attention.

198. **All these faults may be avoided** if the teacher insists that each tone shall be taken truly and sustained its full time before passing to the next, which in turn must be attacked in the same manner.

SINGING OUT OF TUNE

Sharping, reasons and remedy.

199. Children will sometimes sing out of tune when no good reason can be found. **Sharp singing** is usually the result of forcing, or comes through excitement or anxiety to please. The remedy, of course, is to endeavor to restore a calm and well balanced state of mind, and to sing easily, with attention to the tonality.

Flatting, reasons and remedy.

200. **Singing flat** may occur without excuse, but generally it happens for preventable reasons. Among these may be mentioned a close, vitiated atmosphere; an overheated room; bad posture, especially in sitting; fatigue through loud singing; singing in the thick register with strain; improper breathing; lack of thought, and carelessness about the tonality of the key; neglect of voice training exercises, breathing and vocalizes; the desire to imitate cheap singers; neglect to classify

voices; lack of interest; singing when tired or ill, or near the close of a school session.

201. The remedy for the above is evident in most cases.

If the voice has been used as directed in these pages there will be little singing out of tune, as forcing the chest tones out of their proper range is responsible for much of it.

202. Children should cultivate the ear, and gain a nice sense of tone relation, which, through the stimulus of the musical sense, will keep them in tune.

Class affected by poor individual singers.

203. **Many times the trouble is caused by one or two children,** whose flat singing tends to pull down the whole class. These individuals must be found, and properly dealt with, either by classifying their voices differently or by seeing that they acquire a different method of tone production.

Sometimes the singing of a vocalize will tune up the chorus if it is out of sorts.

Physical defects.

204. **Children who habitually sing out of tune** may do so through physical defects of ear or voice that need the physician's care. At any rate, such pupils should not be allowed to injure the ear of other pupils by continuously singing out of tune. Let them be placed in front and do a good deal of listening.

SONG INTERPRETATION

Good voice not everything.

205. When all the foregoing has been accomplished we have yet another matter of the greatest importance. We have prepared the instrument, but unless the singer can feel, and express his feelings, his performance is mechanical and uninspiring.

The singer must be moved by his song, and then the listeners will be equally moved through the sympathy which such singing creates.

We do not sing softly, loudly, fast or slowly in a merely mechanical way, nor do we cultivate the voice simply for tonal beauty, but we make these the means and the medium through which we express our feelings and emotional states.

Effect on the voice of feeling.

When it is under these influences the voice becomes instinct with new beauty, is full of thrilling accents, and is alive with all that puts us in complete sympathy and harmony with the beautiful.

Result of artistic expression.

206. Artistic expression is one of the great influences which lead man onward to his highest perfection, and through expression in art are revealed the possibilities of the perfected soul. It is in musical art that the soul is greatest, since music creates while other arts imitate.

Until we have felt the ennobling emotions we do not realize what we really are. By such experience we approach the knowledge of our ideal self. We grow spiritually through the consciousness of power which comes through such expression.

Ability of the child in artistic performance.

207. "A song is the only art-form which it is possible for the young child to reproduce perfectly by his own effort." His endeavors in drawing and painting, and in the molding of plastic forms, are more or less crude and experimental, but his singing of a song may be as perfect in voice, intonation, rhythm, enunciation and interpretation as the performance of an experienced artist. Through song even little children may join the company of the chosen ones.

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